

REMARKS

This response is submitted in reply to the Office Action mailed on April 7, 2006. Claims 1-18 are pending in the patent application. Claims 1, 8, 9 and 18 have been amended. Claim 11 has been cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer. No new matter has been added by this response.

Claims 8-9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 101 because the Patent Office states that the claimed invention is directed to non-statutory subject matter. Specifically, the Patent Office states that the results obtained from performing the method of claims 8 and 9 are not tangible. Applicant has amended claim 8 to include the step of “displaying the plurality of visually separate groups of objects on a graphical user interface.” The step of displaying the groups (i.e., the results) on the graphical user interface provides results in a tangible form accessible by a user. Accordingly, Applicant submits that claims 8-9 are directed to statutory subject matter and requests that the rejection under § 101 be withdrawn.


Claims 1-18 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph, as not complying with the written description requirement. Specifically, the Patent Office states that the terms “prominence,” “greater prominence” and “less prominence” in the claims are not supported by the specification. The Patent Office further states that there is “no relationship taught in the original disclosure between the strength of a rule and the prominence of a position.” Applicant has amended claims 1, 8 and 18 to clarify these claims and include terms which are supported by the specification. Specifically, Applicant has amended the claims to include that the objects in each group are arranged according to rule strength where the object in the group having the highest rule strength is positioned in a center position and the objects having lesser rule strength are positioned in a plurality of outlying positions. The amendments to claims 1, 8 and 18 are supported in the specification on page 10, lines 10-16, and in Figs. 4, 5, 6 and 8.

Accordingly, Applicant submits that the amendments to claims 1, 8 and 18 are supported by the specification and therefore requests that the rejection of claims 1-18 under § 112 be withdrawn.

In light of the above, Applicant submits that the specification and claims are now in proper form and that the claims are patentable over the art of record. Therefore, Applicant respectfully requests issuance of this case at the Patent Office's earliest convenience.

No fees are due. If any other fees are due in connection with this application, the Patent Office is authorized to deduct the fees from Deposit Account No. 19-1351. If such withdrawal is made, please indicate the attorney docket number (53372-400290) on the account statement.

Respectfully submitted,

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